

Recent history suggests a Blues victory

Will it be a repeat of the 1974 epic?

IF recent history is any guide then Wycombe Wanderers have already won their match against Bournemouth before the teams go to the field.

In three meetings between the clubs, Wycombe have never finished on the losing side — winning twice and drawing the other. The Cherries will be hoping to put that right tomorrow.

The first ever meeting between the clubs occurred in 1973 thanks to the then Wycombe manager Brian Lee's connection with Bisham Abbey.

The Bournemouth Youth team were training at the Abbey and Mr Lee invited them for a mid-week friendly at Loakes Park. Wycombe trounced them 10-0.

John Bond, the Bournemouth boss now attempting great things with Manchester City, vowed to bring back his first team squad for revenge.

Talented

On May 8, 1973, he brought a strong side with nine first teamers, including Phil Boyer. But his plan for revenge backfired on him as Wanderers triumphed 2-1 in a thrilling encounter.

Kenny Swain, now an Aston Villa defender,

scored both their goals. It wasn't long before that highly talented player was on his way to Chelsea, but what an impression Swain made while at Loakes Park.

Another player clearly to have made his mark was skipper John Delaney at the heart of Wycombe's defence. John Bond was so impressed that later he offered professional terms which John accepted.

Wycombe officials could not believe their luck 18 months later when the F.A. Cup second round draw brought together Wycombe and A.F.C. Bournemouth.

Confident

It was a dream draw and the Bournemouth manager John Benson bowed to sentiment and made Delaney captain for the day. 'Big John' had a busy day trying to stop the tide of blue that swept towards the visitors' goal.

Wanderers dominated the game so completely that only half a dozen brilliant saves by goalkeeper Kevin Charlton prevented them winning at the first attempt. On the day Delaney proved his side's most dangerous

striker with two headers that went just wide of the post.

Although being held to a goalless draw, Wanderers were surprisingly confident about the outcome of the replay. Perhaps they were inspired by the thought of a prize third round draw at home to the high-riding First Division side Middlesbrough.

The replay was held at Dean Court on the following Wednesday and seemed to be going Bournemouth's way at half-time thanks to a ninth minute goal by Howard Goddard.

It was then that the first match hero Charlton had to be replaced between the posts by John Wingate, a forward with little experience of goal-keeping. This sight boosted Wycombe, but Wingate coped well and made two saves that could not have been bettered by Charlton, who had suffered a shoulder injury in the first half.

He had no chance with either of the goals that came in a three minute spell midway through the second half.

Tony Horseman, the Loakes Park legend,

equalised in the 69th minute with a brilliant individual goal. Receiving a pass from Terry Reardon, 'Bodger' slipped a defender before sending a sweet shot past Wingate.

Then as Wycombe stormed relentlessly forward, they snatched the lead for the first time, in the 72nd minute. Mick Holifield, still one of Wycombe's key men this year, sprinted 35 yards to the edge of the penalty area before unleashing a shot.

There was little doubt that it was going wide until it struck Steve Perrin and deflected into the back of the net.

Wycombe somehow hung on in those tense desperate minutes to make history by reaching the third round of the F.A. Cup for the first time — and what a reward.

That, Wycombe drew 0-0 with Middlesbrough and then lost the replay in the last minute at Ayresome Park is local football folklore; what fans may not remember is the build-up towards that match, climaxed by that victory over Bournemouth.

But this year Bournemouth come once again seeking revenge under the wise owl of football Alec Stock. Will he be luckier than John Bond and John Benson? We shall soon see.